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AUTHOR Kuo, Wei-Fan
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ABSTRACT

Teacher college and training institutions in the Republic of China are established by the government and limited to public institutions. Graduates of institutions other than normal colleges must receive preservice training in a normal college or school of education of a public university to achieve certification. Preservice training for primary school teachers offers general education at the secondary school level and provides specialized training in pedagogics. Normal colleges and universities training secondary school teachers grant bachelor's degrees after completion of 4 years of undergraduate study and 1 year of teaching practice. Students are recruited through competitive entrance examinations, and successful candidates receive financial aid from the government. Inservice education is offered through summer and evening institutes and week-end courses, short term refresher courses, and television and broadcasting courses. Some inservice programs are directed toward higher academic degrees while others furnish teachers with new educational techniques. Future improvements are planned for upgrading junior normal colleges, providing open access to teacher education, broadening teachers' range of knowledge, and avoiding feminization of the profession and high teacher turnover. (JD)

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THE ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Wei-Fan Kuo, President,
National Taiwan Normal University,
Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China.

I. Introduction

Teaching has traditionally been considered one of the most respectable professions in China. Every year on the 28th of September, which is the birthday of Confucius, the nation celebrates Teachers' Day. It has become a custom that on that day the President of the Republic, accompanied by the Minister of Education, hosts a luncheon for hundreds of teachers and professors representing the various categories of schools in the country.

It is widely believed that every teacher's conduct should be a "norm," or model, for the general public to follow, and that pre-service education in the institutions entrusted with professional training helps to cultivate the character and career commitment that the vocation of teaching demands. Teacher education in the Republic of China is popularly called "normal education" in its literal meaning, and teacher training institutions are termed normal colleges and universities in accordance with the social expectations demanded of these institutions to provide a working atmosphere of professionalism in view of fostering in student-teachers a genuine urge to teach.

A teacher training institution is frequently cited to be analogous to a military academy in the sense that education is considered a sort of "national spiritual defense" against the corruption of moral values rooted in Chinese culture. It is probably for this reason that the "Normal Education Act" (Teacher Education Act) stipulates that teacher colleges and training institutions should be established by the government and be limited to public institutions. Private colleges are not accredited to offer professional teaching

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courses. For graduates from universities other than normal colleges and university who wish to enter the teaching profession, it is necessary to receive pre-service training in a normal college, or in some cases, in a school of education of a public university.

To sum up, certified teachers in the Republic of China can be divided into three categories according to their training background.

(1) Graduates from normal university and normal colleges.

(2) Graduates from a College of Education or a university School of Education. (There is only one of each, respectively, in the R.O.C.)

(3) Graduates from other universities and colleges than the institutions mentioned above who have received professional training in these teacher training institutions.

According to the latest statistics*, there are a total of 170,334 teachers in the Republic of China. The total number includes 69,613 primary school teachers, 44,796 junior high school teachers, 13,156 senior high school teachers, and 13,147 vocational school teachers. It is interesting to note that more than 85% of primary school teachers graduated from the nine junior normal colleges well-distributed geographically in Taiwan. By contrast, there are about 30% of secondary teachers (junior and senior, general and vocational) who are graduates of the three teacher institutions responsible for the training of secondary school teachers, namely, National Taiwan Normal University, National Kaohsiung Normal College, and National Taiwan College of Education.

The reasons for such a large percentage of certified secondary teachers coming from universities and colleges other than teacher training institutions are quite evident. In the early period when secondary education was expanding in the Republic of China, the considerable growth in teacher demand was far beyond the supply provided by the National Taiwan Normal University (Kaohsiung Normal College was established in 1967, Taiwan College of Education in 1971). The demand for secondary teachers was particularly acute around the period when basic education was extended from six to nine years in 1968. In the late 1960s, there was quite a significant number of uncertified college graduates assigned to teaching duty. In recent years, the growing over-supply of teachers made it possible for the teacher training institutions to shift the emphasis from providing

* Educational Statistics of the Republic of China, Ministry of Education, Taipei, 1982.

professional courses to uncertified teachers to in-service training in view of upgrading professional standards and teaching competency.

II. Pre-service Education

In the Republic of China, pre-service education for primary and secondary teachers is still on separate tracks. The junior normal colleges, upgraded from normal schools in the early 1960s, provide five year programs for the students who have completed basic education and wish to enter primary school teaching. The training program is therefore split up into a lower section offering general education at the secondary level, and an upper section providing more specialized training in pedagogics. By contrast, normal college and university, responsible for the pre-service training of secondary teachers, grant bachelor's degrees to students after they have successfully completed four years of undergraduate study and one year of teaching practice. The graduates of both institutions are entitled to teach either in senior high schools or junior high schools, although it is becoming a marked development for senior high schools and vocational schools to recruit teachers with a Master's degree. A Master's degree is granted to students after a two-year graduate program and presenting a thesis in a graduate institute of normal college and university.

The Normal University system can be traced back in its origins to the "école normale supérieure" tradition. Such a teacher training institution, with its university status, has a unique character resulting from its dual function of combining both teacher education and educational research. Although Normal University is expected to maintain an academic standing capable of competing with other prestigious universities in the country, both its staff and students are bound by a distinctive "normalien" quality emphasizing professional commitment towards a teaching career. Certain conflicts between the pursuit of academic excellence and professional commitment are likely to arise in the process of achieving this balance.

National Taiwan Normal University has offered doctoral programs since its acquisition of university status in 1956 and grants the Master's degree in seventeen disciplines. Over the last decade, its graduate program has markedly grown compared to the undergraduate programs, in which the enrollment is even slightly declining owing to the over-supply of secondary teachers in many subject fields. Although the university graduates with a Master's or doctoral degree are encouraged to teach in high schools,

most of them still try to seek positions in colleges and universities for better remuneration. In fact, there is an increasing number of junior faculty members of higher-learning institutions pursuing advanced studies in the Normal University.

In the Republic of China, all the universities and colleges, including teacher training institutions, recruit students through competitive entrance examinations. Every year during the summer, the junior normal colleges hold a joint entrance examination to select their applicants. The examination is so competitive that in certain colleges only 5—10 percent of the applicants can be admitted. By contrast, Normal College and University join the other universities and institutions offering degree programs in a nation-wide entrance examination for student recruitment. The once-a-year College Joint Entrance Examination (CJEE) is currently one of the most persistent sources of tension both for students and their parents, as well as for high school teachers. In 1981, approximately 97,000 applicants took the CJEE and only 29,000 can be admitted to one of the colleges or universities in the Republic of China. The intense competition reflects the comparative rankings of the higher learning institutions, this is partially because every applicant makes a long list of priority choices of departments and colleges. Colleges and universities are thus categorized in a hierarchy of prestige in the public mind. Teacher training institutions in general, and Normal University in particular, are among a few institutions for which the applicants compete most fiercely for admission. It is not just for their academic standing, but also owing to the attraction of direct aid and tuition-waiver enjoyed by all student teachers.

Financial aid to student-teachers is evidently a way of attracting more candidates to the profession. The students, once enrolled in a normal college or university, enjoy tuition-waiver and their living expenses will be borne by the government. The allocation of living allowances covers room and board, school uniform and textbook costs, pocket money for daily expenses, and aid for participating in study tours. During the final year of training when a student-teacher practices teaching in a specific school on a full-time basis, a pre-salary is awarded, its amount almost equivalent to the salary of a qualified teacher.

Direct aid entails a statutory obligation for students to serve as teachers or other education professionals (such as librarians, health education specialists, school psychologists, etc.) for a period of five years. When student-teachers enter a normal college, they are required to sign an agreement endorsed by their parents, or guardians, to fulfill

their teaching obligation. If they fail to fulfill their obligation for this fixed period, they are required to refund the cost of their training. Studies show that owing to the direct aid, the teacher training institutions recruit students mostly from families with comparatively modest incomes.

Although many normal colleges are no longer organized as boarding institutions, they are still predominantly residential and exercise a higher degree of control over the discipline of their trainees. These colleges are co-educational and extra-curricular activities on campus are highly emphasized. Student life on campus is organized with the intention of creating a working atmosphere and enhancing the spirit of professional commitment.

III. In-service Education

During the last decade, one of the most marked developments in teacher education is the increase in the size of in-service education. The relationship between pre-service and in-service training has been seriously pondered and it is understood that the teaching profession requires its practitioners to continue their education throughout their entire professional life. The objective of in-service training is two-fold: it is designed not only to help the substitute teachers in their professional training in view of certification, but also to assist the already certified teachers to gain the new knowledge and competence that they have to master.

A paramount issue existing in in-service education concerns whether the program provided should be a sort of advanced study by nature, leading to a higher degree, or a series of practically-oriented programs designed to furnish the in-service teacher with new ideas and new competence needed for the instruction of today's youth. In the former instance, the design of in-service curriculum is typically fitted to the academic-type credit system of the university, while in the latter instance, the program is tailored to the immediate need of the teacher for improving his teaching effectiveness. However, the controversy is complementary. There has been a step made toward reconciliation, cosidering the academic incentive of the teacher on the one hand, and the professional need on the other.

There are four types of in-service training programs existing in the Republic of China:

(1) Summer Institute for Teachers –

Taking advantage of the long and hot summer vaction, the teacher training institutions offer summer courses for non-established teachers who were recruited in times of teacher shortage. In most cases, the courses stress professional training in accordance with the necessary qualifications for claiming established status. Now it is becoming popular for colleges and universities to provide forty-credit-hour programs, in various disciplines, equivalent to a Master's degree for those certified teachers and educational administrators holding a bachelor's degree. Although a certificate instead of a Master's degree is granted at the end of four consecutive summers of study, certificate holders still enjoy many benefits, such as better chances for promotion and a higher salary.

(2) Evening Institute and Week-end Courses for Teachers –

Almost every teacher training institution has established an evening institute for local in-service teachers. In the case of the junior normal colleges, the evening institutes organize programs for those established teachers who graduated from old-time normal schools which provided professional training for a study period of three years. The evening institute in a normal college or university organizes programs for junior normal college graduates intending to seek a degree. The duration of study is generally three or four years. For those in-service teachers who live far from the city where a normal college is located, advanced study must be pursued during the week-end. Some training institutions provide courses for teachers on Saturday and Sunday morning.

(3) Short-term Refresher Courses –

In cooperation with educational authorities, the teacher training institutions provide a variety of refresher courses on a short-term basis. In most cases, the trainees are selected and sent to take these courses by local educational authorities or by the school where they serve. Training and living expenses are borne by the educational agency concerned.

(4) Television and Broadcasting Courses for Teachers –

China Television Service (CTS), a television network which operates a school-on-the-air program at high school and junior college levels, organizes television and broadcasting courses allowing more than 14,000 primary teachers to take college courses. These teachers, who learn at a distance from the classroom, also receive textbooks and other educational materials regularly from the teacher training institutions which

collaborate with CTS on the operation of the programs. Teacher-students must accumulate a certain number of course-credits in addition to attending two summer sessions on campus before they can be awarded a diploma equivalent to those of junior normal college graduates.

IV. Current Issues and Future Efforts

During the past ten or fifteen years, many controversial issues were raised within the community of teacher educators, and numerous efforts were made to find new ways and a better system for educating teachers. There are five issues which are particularly apparent and which indicate certain directions for future efforts.

(1) Upgrading of Junior Normal Colleges

The dominant strategy promoted in campaigns to improve the pre-service education of primary teachers has recently focused on the upgrading of junior normal colleges to four-year colleges. The advocates of this position point out that a youngster leaving basic education at the age of fifteen is too inexperienced to decide his future career. The present system of junior normal colleges, which covers five years of study from grade 10 to grade 14, does not provide for metriculation with academic type senior high schools and universities. Therefore, its students, once admitted, would find it difficult to transfer to another track. Moreover, the main aim of upgrading to college status would enable the prospective primary teachers to acquire a more solid basis of general knowledge, and also to diminish the demarcation between the education of primary teachers and that of secondary teachers. Nevertheless, there is some worry that the restructuring of the junior normal college would put it in a rather disadvantageous position to compete with well-established colleges and universities for recruiting students in the College Joint Entrance Examination. The quality of its students would be downgraded although the institution is upgraded.

(2) Open Access to Teacher Training Programs

There recently have been growing pressures for broadening the recruitment base for teacher training. The increasing number of college graduates who are seeking a teaching job and are being excluded from training programs in the education profession are advocating for their right to access to teacher training. To cope with this pressure arising from universities and colleges which are not entrusted with teacher training, the educational authorities intend to initiate a one-year program of courses in pedagogics

in normal colleges and universities for all categories of university graduates who wish to enter the teaching profession. This program would include a period of supervised practice teaching and allocation of direct aid and living allowance during the training period. Such a new training model for secondary teachers is expected to alleviate the imbalance between the supply and the demand for high school teachers in certain subjects and particularly that of vocational teachers.

(3) Broadening the Teacher's Range of Knowledge

There is a heavy demand for the teacher of today to be equipped with broader knowledge beyond his major field of study. To avoid the risk of being completely ignorant of other subjects, which might be the case with a teacher having only a single specialization, dual specialization in secondary teacher training is becoming popular. A student-teacher has to choose one supplementary subject other than his major during his training period. The importance of a liberal education for the prospective teacher is also beginning to draw more attention in the Republic of China.

(4) Avoiding the Feminization of the Teaching Profession

The ratio of female to male teachers in the total teaching profession is so markedly increasing that it has drawn public concern and hot debate about whether it is appropriate to set a fixed ratio of sex distribution in the student recruitment of teacher training institutions. It seems that female students are more adapted to the current entrance examination and by consequence the student population of normal colleges and universities is becoming increasingly feminized. Although teacher training institutions tend to attempt to set up policies of admission regarding sex distribution, half male and half female, for example, strong protests were made whenever there was a move to take such a measure. The rationale of the protester focuses on the equal opportunity for competition.

(5) Caution Against Turnover After In-Service Training

While enrollment in the in-service training program has been soaring in recent years, there has been a retreat from the rhetoric for its expansion. The disillusion has arisen from the fact that so many teachers, having completed their in-service program leading to a higher degree, seek new positions in schools of the next highest level. There are very many primary teachers who have moved to teach at junior high schools right after their completion of university courses. It is also charged that the teachers who study at an in-service program and teach at the same time spend such a proportion of

their time for the preparation of homework that their teaching duty in the school is often neglected. There are numerous examples cited by those opposed to this of how a teacher works through his in-service study in a university in sacrifice of his own routine duty in the school where he serves. Those diligent teacher-students of the in-service program are most often dedicated climbers of the career ladder. It is recognized that unless these teachers are obliged to stay on their present jobs for a fixed period after in-service education, the expansion of in-service programs should be cautious.

Teacher education in the Republic of China is still in a stage of transition. Many efforts have been made to create better conditions for innovative change. In response to the changing role of teachers and the changing school environment, a new structure of teacher education is emerging in order to meet the needs and responsibilities of a highly dynamic age.